

WE ALL MUST HELP CORRAL JACKASS BEHAVIOR

Last Tuesday, making good on campaign promise, the two newly elected guns in the city's arsenal against crime presented their proposal to the City Council to curb crime in Fairfield. John Mraz and Frank Kardos fired off a substantial salvo of strategic thinking that hit the mark. John Mraz is a prior valedictorian of the Dirty Harry school of kick butt as well as a battle-wizened hard-ass with a passionate heart, a level head and chutzpah. Frank Kardos showed the chops we all knew he had with his crisp intellectualizations with a practical flair. Thanks for bringing your game.

If you think you are hearing praise and support for those who work to serve us, you're right. Fairfield city leadership is diverse and talented. Marilyn Farley offers reflective reasoning, Jack Batson has a talent for highly informed strategic and tactical logic, and Harry Price gravitates towards a global, future-oriented, big picture style while Police Chief Bill Gresham and City Manager Kevin O'Rourke bring professionalism, expertise and talented staffs.

Nature, politics and success in effecting social change requires diversity. Leaders emerge, but the best teams are always the ones with the greatest engagement of all the players. Just as 'Prince' Michael Johnson, Solano County's administrator, needs to be brought down a notch or three, these folks need to be supported.

The council must publicly make good on its charge to price out the crime-fighting plan, do the data drilling, classify the positions, examine the feasibility and legality of 911 surcharges and have staff do what they do. Deliberations are just that – deliberate.

So far, so good. Staff has the proposal, the media is doing its job and Gresham and the thin blue line gets kudos for a recently published dropping crime rate. Community policing policies, such as the crime free multi-housing program and the third Citizens' Police Academy, are running well.

Now, we must look over the rainbow. We will always have crime. If crime is a jackass out of the barn running amuck, yes, we have to catch it. But for God's sake, think long term. How about breeding less jackasses, building better corrals and keeping the grass greener in home pastures so that jackasses act more like thoroughbreds who shoulder their fair load.

Support getting the Boys & Girls clubs built. Tap the abilities of Kardos regarding highly successful post-secondary programs and pump the Chamber of Commerce. Build a diverse, well-publicized blue-ribbon commission on crime that works hand-in-hand with commerce, educators, social services and the City Council and police. Across America, citizens have partnered successfully with police, public officials, state and national authorities, foundations, businesses, and social and religious organizations. There is a direct connection between social and political health. Investment in the "circle of virtuosity" through engaged citizenship is self-propelling. Good begets good. But for the dividend of citizen disinterest is decimation and in time, death of a nation.

I believe the City Council has no intention to let this be a back burner issue but the burners must remain on in every household in Fairfield. Ensuring the quality of our life is absolutely the responsibility of all of us – parents, students, businesses, educators, residents and assorted jackasses who occupy police time by being idiots in the way we drive, conduct our lives, raise our children, model behavior, complain unnecessarily or give reason for others to necessarily complain about us.

We elected the council to lead but we are doomed if we sit on our ever broadening behinds whining and hoping crime will all go away. If we do, the next smell wafting through our little Hamlet will be the exhaust of departing cars and the pungent aroma of jackass's ranging wild and free.

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